

Gomen ne, Onii-sama

– Sorry, Brother! –

- Volume 2 -

A Side-Story with the Villain and Side Cast

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CHAPTER 1

A DANCE PARTY WITH THE VILLAIN AND SIDE CHARACTERS (FIRST HALF)

Wearing a copper red dress to match her pupils and hair, the girl kneeled before the king sitting on his throne.

In order to justify her status, honor, and responsibility with her small body, she knelt alone on the cold marble floor.

“The Ruzil present head, Origa Emelda Ruzil offers her greetings. Here to report that the ceremony for the change of leadership proceeded without a problem.”

Her words flowed smoothly; though the voice was high like a child’s, it gave none of the feeling that it was a child speaking. Her eyes with their red pupils did not waver, even in front of the king himself, while pledging loyalty. She sat, unmoving like a doll, quietly on the hard floor.

“Although I have heard of your talent, I did not expect you to come as the family head at such a young age. I am very impressed by your capability.”

“In regards to your statement, my position as the the family head is unimportant. I only earnestly desire to contribute to His Majesty and the country.”

The eyes of the king as he viewed the girl and expressed his appreciation, contained not even the slightest trace of affection.

The words of the girl that spoke of love and affection for the king, also felt as though they meant nothing of the sort.

“Then dedicate your life to the country, and swear to burn away the plots of the other countries.”

“As my king says.”

They watched each other emotionlessly, and continued to exchange only ceremonial words.

Without even a trace of feelings like affection.

And he who supervised the country, to she who would protect the country, clearly showed the position of the other.

“I’ll anticipate great things from you. Daughter of fire.”

The harsh sound of the King’s staff hitting the floor signaled the end of the meeting.



“Well, I’m sure you will improve the security of our country.”

“Such a lovely appearance, and so intelligent too...”

“As expected of the blood of the king... it’s quite excellent.”

Ugh... today, I heard these lines way too many times. It could be said that most of the work today was to keep my face stuck in a smile. My face is definitely going to have muscle pains; because of the height of a child I feel like crying when enclosed in a row of intimidating adults.

In the morning, attend the audience with His Majesty, from noon go around greeting the castle’s residents earnestly, and dance after sunset! After many years secluded in the mansion in planning, and suddenly pulled into a social debut, for sure, I’m feeling my limit.

Since, after all, I'm the villain, even though social relationships are awkward, they're something essential for me to form. Also in order to instill a good impression somehow, although it makes me feel a little disgusted...

Since I can't afford a slip of the tongue, even of a single word, it's far more mentally exhausting than normal conversation.

"Everyone. Since I am still a young person, I appreciate your guidance in times to come."

Sloppy salutation at the end! And my cheek twitched from being forced into a smile.

At this time, moving between the people, the cross dressed girl, Keika, came to my side.

Oh, let me assert that cross dressing isn't her hobby; she's dressed like such because I asked her to fill the role of my escort today. Originally, if a lady comes to a formal occasion, they are required to be escorted by the head of the family or another close male. However, my father is no longer staying with the family.

Although of course there was talk that I just need to take a man of the family as a substitute, such a presence would be considered to be my fiance, and right now I would still rather not think about such a troublesome thing, just for now at least. And so, I asked her to dress as a boy, and such are the circumstances behind this situation.

Perhaps partly because the women stand on the battlefield alongside the men in this country, the cross dressing wasn't too much of a problem, which was very fortunate for me.

“Excuse me for interrupting your chat. Origa-sama, we should leave to prepare for the masquerade.”

I think Keika is worried about me— this is probably an excuse for a break.

At this point, it would be very unfortunate to have a slip of the tongue and to ruin my debut into society.

While involuntarily doing the guts pose in my mind, I make sure not to show it, smiling to attract the attention of the people.

“Thank you. Everybody, because we have more business in the evening, I will be leaving to get ready.”

Although the wife seemed a little surprised that the one with the escort role is a woman, she said nothing and only looked over with cold eyes. Her husband looked over the girl dressed as a man from top to bottom with a lecherous gaze, and cleared his throat.

What....

Although it's possible that this is a rare case, society is slightly more brutal than I thought it was. I mean, I am aware that such a situation is unconventional here. Outside, I wonder if I should be more careful of things other than the conspiracies in the novel.

“Already so late? I'm sorry I had to you hold back. Origa-sama, would you like me to deliver the presents for the celebration later? And, you are?”

“I apologize for failing to mention my name. I follow at Origa-sama’s side; my name is Keika.”

It is fortunate that Keika is excellent.

Because I wanted to resolve the situation with Onii-sama quickly, to avoid dealing with an engagement I panicked and quickly chose a replacement.

So, to be honest, I didn’t expect such ability and manners.

It was a gamble when I chose based on the origin of her father; I can use her to solve the problem with my Onii-sama..... Hopefully she ends up being an excellent pair of hands for me.

She’s talented as a magician, attentive, skilled at imitation, able to do office work flawlessly, her basic manners are perfectly schooled for social relationships, and above all, she is an adult.

Due to the adverse effects of my many years of studying indoors I was not able to cultivate the necessary social skills, so I decided to copy her.

“A new representative of the Ruzil family. She seems quite fresh, I give my best regards.”

“.....Keika. This is the Earl who governs the land of Suja.”

“I am glad to have the pleasure of meeting you for the first time, Earl. Speaking of Suja, we have heard rumors that a new company was founded recently?”

Though there are words mixed with thorns, Keika continued the flow of conversation without hesitation.

However, when he hears Keika's words as she tried to continue the conversation, the middle-aged Earl showed a somehow disgusting smile.

"Oh. Last week, this matter was also inquired by your predecessor and replied to... is the council of aides of the predecessor I am acquainted with, not listening to you?"

—Finally, it came out. The aristocracy that emphasizes the connection with the father, and looks down on upstarts.

The conspiracy of the high society, probably.

As I thought, like always, there was the need to steel myself.

Usually, there are strong connections from the beginning from the predecessor, made for the new family head. However, thinking about the future, since I would like to be attached to nobody but also avoid creating enemies, it is best to cancel relationships as gently as possible.

Even if they are willing to build relationships up again, I am not, because those of the generation of my father will be obstacles in the future.

Even so, an inquiry from my moody father, huh. If it's a good that the strangely perceptive [Old Family Head] had cared about, it's probably not just any company.

However, the report in the study I inherited did not have such a feeling.

There seems to be a slight problem.

—Glancing, as if giving a signal to Keika through eye contact, she started saying words of apology in a heavyhearted voice.

“We have no excuse. He is receiving medical care and not in a state to verify such information. I will make sure to check the facts at a later date.”

Currently, my mother is unwell, so she went to a nursing home as a sitter to the father. That they are staying there to recuperate, is the public pretext. The actual situation concerning the aides, is that they are not cooperating with me, and I can’t do anything about them.

As for my father, he was allowed to survive because he is married to a royal princess, which can be considered to be some kind of power. Hence, my hope to form a relationship with my father has not yet ended.

But, in order to make it as easy as possible for me to lead the clan in the future, I am trying to eliminate as much external interference as possible.

That’s right, even interference of the task of serving His Majesty the King to defend the country.

Although now there are a dime a dozen people who say that they would like to work to become my hands and feet, that I was able to discover a talent that does not have anyone’s finger marks at such an early stage was fortunate. This situation is not something for an outsider, even if that outsider can help with my problems.

Nevertheless, if this relationship which has already formed is arranged sufficiently it is probably perfect.

Ruzil who [Overthrew the incompetent predecessor, a talented person] is the family head.

With this, I can call the old aides who are linked with my father incompetent for this miscommunication and pinning them with a crime, and later, I can also claim I have no relationship to this Earl.

To begin an actual friendly relationship, it is necessary to investigate him.

I am either going to build a good relationship with this person now, or go back and investigate some more.

Perhaps he noticed my intent to break ties with him; the Earl's face has quite a bitter expression.

Choosing Keika was probably the right decision.

—The air seems to have gotten stiff.

“Oh dear, so it was true. It seems I should gift you some get well presents as well.”

“Although it can be said that you have the talent to become a close aid, can a young person like your master handle the role of a magician properly...”

The wife, with a pretty voice whose harmony could cause you to feel relaxed, out of nowhere, with quiet words of irony, filled the area with a feeling of heat.

While I suppress panic, Keika steps in front of me.

She stopped and breathed in deeply, her face becoming pale.

“I’m sorry for causing you to be bothered by my awkwardness. I am still inexperienced, as I am still young. But, unlike my awkward self, my Lord is a young and talented mage. Therefore, you don’t need to worry too much. My lord will not cause the Earl any trouble. I am sure that Suja will be managed by the Earl excellently, and there will be no need for the use of fire.”

“Tsu...” (I believe this is the sfx for an exhale?)

Aaaaaaaa I messed up...

As a magician I’m expected to help protect the country.

She really cut right to the point.

“Regarding the military situation, we will do our best to help wherever possible. In protecting the peace of these lands, we greatly appreciate the good management of the Earl, which lightens the burden upon my master. It is our intention that in the case of any emergency, we will help for the sake of our honor as a main family, and we will watch carefully for any failures that occur.”

The Earl protects his territory and I will go help in emergencies because I’m the family head? Kind of the truth.. Err.. wait a sec.

This way of describing it favors me a bit too much.. Well, after all, I’m a strangely talented girl, but also kind of a disappointing human. Generally the people of the family tend to try to attract the bigger and more influential people, and she’s definitely doing at least a little of this. Rather than picking a fight from the small insults, threatening a life is rather extreme.

The man who can talk glibly and politely completely sunk into silence. As for the wife who had been sending an amiable gaze until now, her smile and gaze both became stiff.

Words of the subordinates are the responsibility of the boss.

Such words float in my head as I look up at the sky, but my escape from reality is blocked by a regal and solid ceiling.

I tried to avoid any slip of the tongue, and yet from the very first day of my debut I've somehow made an enemy.

Well, in the end, I'm a villain so I guess it's fine.

I think I didn't do too poorly in my debut, but I'm not sure if that's just overconfidence.Did I seem like a final boss?

Well, although I was prepared for the life of a villain, ending up like this from the beginning was a bit out of my expectations.

I feel a bit sick to the stomach...

"Keika."

"Yes. I apologize for my excessive words."

I've had enough inappropriate comments for today!

With some perfunctory closing remarks to the Earl, we quickly separate from him and his wife.

I snort. The standing figure of a crossdressing girl proudly escorting me is not even a little reproachful. Walking next to me, she also shows no signs of expecting any

punishment from her master. I'll look at her proudly for now, but later I'm definitely giving her a sermon.

When words are spread, the fact that the one who said them was the retainer won't matter to anyone. "The new family head of the Ruzil is like this", such rumors will quickly travel. By the time of the dance in the afternoon, my image as a brash, domineering fire family head will be rooted.

Like this, I seem to have ended up as the [Princess of the Inferno Origa] of the novel.

I wanted to gently and amiably deal with the threads of conspiracy... but it seems like fixing this is impossible..... Is it not.....?

CHAPTER 2

A DANCE PARTY WITH THE VILLAIN AND SIDE CHARACTERS (SECOND HALF)

A while after changing into my ball gown, I return to the square; the people greeting each other slowly break off, and the dance begins.

The ball that regularly occurs is also a place for machinations. The women all decorate themselves carefully to stand out in the eyes of the men, and sharp eyed men compliment women while carefully measuring their worth.

.....Aside from the muddy situation, most girls yearn to have a chance to dance at a royal ball. I, however, am dancing alone. Even though it's my first time here. I feel rather lonely.

Because I was worried that she would cause another argument, I decided to leave Keika and come by myself. It's hard not to laugh when thinking that the main reason I brought her was as a partner for the dance. Even though I gave her a serious lecture, I don't think she reflected at all...

"Greetings, young Ruzil family head. This is your first time at a ball?"

"Greetings. I am happy that you would speak with me."

Occasionally people will come by and attempt to talk to me, but those looking for a partner tend to take off at an indecent speed.

So, I hold some fruit juice and just be a wallflower.

Anyways, I pretty much expected it to end up like this based on what I knew.

Normally, a social debut for a noble daughter will occur around the age of sixteen. So, it's unlikely that anyone would invite me to dance. Rather, if any adults seriously hit on a ten-year old girl, they would definitely be certified as a dangerous person.

Another thing is that fortunately, as the head of a magician family, not as much is expected of me from my role as a noble.

Ties of blood are only to strengthen a family's foundation. Therefore, I don't need to actively seek a partner. This doesn't mean that I'm free to marry as I want, though; marriages of convenience are much more common.

In the first places, because marriages are generally repeated within our family, something like a political marriage outside the family is unlikely to happen— though my parents are a special case.

Well, even if I arrive at a marriageable age nothing would happen for [Origa] .

The author wrote it this way.

Because her face is way too intense and villainous, nobody tried to marry her at all.

“

Indeed, many of the sons here are of a similar stature to me. Some people probably brought their sons to attempt to match them with me.

But, possibly because rumors of the earlier exchange spread, they're all staying away and avoiding eye contact out of fright.

A state like the untouchable curse of a god.

Perhaps they're afraid that if they make me angry they'll be abandoned if an emergency occurs; that must be quite a heavy responsibility.

—well, that’s just how it is. I definitely didn’t secretly hope to trigger some kind of love flag at my first ball. I’m just satisfied if Onii-sama can have a better childhood behind the scenes.

The life of a villain is quite withered and lacking in love.

“Haaa...”

“Oh, are you feeling tired? Origa-sama?”

As I shut my eyes, I involuntarily let out a sigh. Oops. Someone speaks, so I look behind me and see a huge man with a body like a bear. He showed a kind looking smile, and patted my heavily decorated head lightly.

“It’s been a long time. You’ve grown a lot; I’m surprised.”

The head of one of the five great magician families, the Harvester family who are magicians of the forest.

He visited Gil-sama occasionally, and I sometimes encountered him at those times.

I cherish the memories of those times.

Since, after Gil-sama was taken care of, I no longer saw him at all.

The wild looking Harvester-sama in the Ruzil mansion was the ideal father I secretly desired.

The parent-child relationship at home being strained and uncomfortable only strengthened that feeling.

“Long time no see, Marquis Harvester-sama. I took far too long to greet you after becoming the new head; I apologize.”

“Nah, it’s fine, I don’t care. Hey, you, get something sweet for the lady to drink.”

The chamberlain bowed, and moved off to the side to get a drink, while Harvester-sama bent down his large bulk. I wondered why he was clearing away the people, and when I tilted my neck back to look up, I saw him use his hands to hide his mouth.

He looked as if he was going to speak of some great secret.

“I was quite surprised by the rumors that spread in a single day. From such a cute princess to such a serious person, it’s quite a dramatic change for a single year.”

It seems that my thoughts were groundless, and I could only return a wry smile to the face showing a mischievous smile.

Ahh... as I thought, the conversation from a little while ago definitely spread.

If it has spread to the marquises, they’re definitely treating it as a fact and not a rumor.

Anyways, I’d rather not be teased like this. I’m way too different from the old me, and I would rather not have knowledge of the previous me spread. If that was known by society, I’d definitely be laughed at behind my back.

“I came today to introduce myself to you. —only because, I have to.”

Behind the giant, a boy looked at me while rocking on his shoes. Perhaps a little older than me —he looks to be a similar age to Gil-sama. His sharp countenance still had childishness remaining to show his age.

It was an extremely unpleasant face, inflating his cheeks as if they were being pushed outwards by a massive hand.

....hmmm?

This person, haven’t I seen him somewhere before?

“Nice to meet you. I am the Ruzil family head, Origa Emelda Ruzil.”

He’s wearing well made clothing; since he was brought by Harvester-sama to such a formal occasion could he be a magician? Harvester-sama probably told him to introduce himself, but he diverted his gaze and snorted. I’m a little taken aback by his attitude of not even trying to hide his bad mood at being brought to this dance.

I can’t help but think, what a moody child.

“My name, Atlas. Greetings.”

Harvester-sama impatiently urges him to speak in a low voice, and the boy becomes increasingly sullen. Harvester-sama seems to not mind it at all though, and continues smiling, as time gradually passes.

Still, though... the combination of greyish black hair and brown eyes isn’t that unusual...

To have met him somewhere is extremely unlikely considering my life of withdrawal in the past few years.

As I think about this, he finally opens his mouth.

“Atlas... Atlas Ville Harvester.”

And after curtly speaking just his name, he closed his mouth again as if it were tied shut. His brown eyes of a similar appearance to those of the Marquis next to him suggest strong ties of blood.

In the clan of the forest, the first child inherits the title of Harvester. So, this child should be the next marquis.

.....Atlas?

Ehh, [Atlas of the Forest] ?

Aaaaaaah I remember now!

He's one of the ones who will be close friends with my brother! Lacking the ability to stand out among the main characters, he never really got the spotlight in the story.

"This kid usually spends all his time in the knight school full of men. Because of that, contact with such a cute girl like Origa makes him embarrassed like this. I'm sorry that my son is such a guy, but; Origa, I wonder if you would be willing to dance a song with my son?"

From Harvester-sama's words that he spoke while smiling, I felt that this request was entirely out of goodwill. And so, the next head of the Harvester family and the current head of the Ruzil family ended up dancing together at a ball.

It's just that, the future family head of the forest, to the family head of fire, is going to be a threat.

I try to lighten the burden of maneuvering, and try to follow, while thinking.

Just to dance with me, he recalled his son all the way from the training school deep in the mountains.

What excessive kindness....

However, though on the surface I am casually impressed by this kindness, I'm totally panicking in my head.

Careless. I was careless.

I was carefully paying attention to the movements of the other main characters, but the presence of this support character I totally forgot. Because, compared to the other main characters who used flashy attacks, he wasn't as much of a highlight.

Originally, when [Origa] became the head at sixteen years old, Atlas would not be there. According to the story, I would meet him in a place like this, but much later, only once.

I have to be careful; this could change the story too much.

This boy should have met my brother, fostered friendship, become stronger, and been my enemy—

“Origa-sama? I guess, if you’re willing-“

“No.”

After thinking about all of this, I ended up with nothing.

In order to give priority to the story, I should leave here with indecent haste. However, in order to respect Harvester-sama’s favor, I have to be polite to avoid breaking this relationship.

—it should be ok if it’s just one song. I turn to the boy with a smile on my face.

His eyes are looking at me sharply, as though he is suspicious of me- or, perhaps this is hostility?

“Disgusting.”

Asserting this with a grim look, the boy went off around the courtyard and towards the back.

“

Well, since I don’t want to mess with the story as much as possible, I feel a little grateful. But, even though I feel relieved, what’s with this sense of defeat...

Rather, to a person in the position of heir, isn't it bad to take such an attitude in public?

Although it's only in name, am I not an earl? An earl's daughter?

When I looked up at Harvester-sama's face, it was distorted with anger.

"ATLAASSS!"

Perhaps it's the rebellious age, or possibly I'm just hated.... In any case, it will be a struggle to fix. Rather than the mental state of aristocracy, the goal of a rambunctious boy from a knight training school would be to look tough.

Speaking of which, I remember many friendly arguments involving Gil-sama in the novel. I feel that his character is just the type for this kind of event.

Apologizing, Harvester-sama runs around searching for his son, while many nobles show great interest. The head of the fire clan, and the future head of the forest clan in disagreement- they wouldn't miss the seeds of such a relationship at the first meeting.

In a single day, before the sun even set, rumors have spread that the future head of the Forest clan is a problem child.

I don't follow him, since I would prefer to avoid trouble in the future.

...the older aristocracy are picking a fight by spreading all these rumors, and don't feel any shame by picking on someone much younger than they are. To the nobles who made a smile that showed that they had heard the rumors, I did my best to explain the circumstances.

Hmm...?

Why is the situation becoming worse and worse....

Even though my hands are full dealing with my family...

I absolutely would rather not be involved with someone, even if it means making rude statements when meeting!



Today was really terrible.

In the short time after I boarded this horse-drawn carriage, I don't even know how many times I've sighed. Of course, I couldn't show even a glimpse of my regretful state, but thinking about the long time I spent speaking to others with an apologetic face, I can't help but sigh.

Well, haa. The outcome was not what I wanted.

Gently with a friendly atmosphere, I totally failed the original goal.

Because of the accident that occurred in the middle of the dance, I was able to collect information from much of the nobility as a result.

—again, most were speaking of the news that the skirmishes on the western border are going to intensify.

Though it's unlikely a trump card like me would suddenly be sent to the front, it's necessary to send some people from the family.

But, sending a skilled person, in the current Ruzil family, would be a problem. Of those who wish to go, however, there will be plenty.

“Move too much, and be crushed.. Tch.”

“Origa-sama?”

I'm developing in a similar way to the Origa of the novel, surrounded by enemies. Although it's only a guess, perhaps on the hero's side of the story the situation has changed greatly.

“When you return the mansion, form a plan.”

Certainly, when looking at the bowed head, the only thing I can see is respect. This is how it is in the Ruzil family. Age doesn't matter. Only if you're stronger than everyone, will everyone be obedient.

But, in aristocratic society, this is not the case.

No matter how talented I am, said to have taken the seat of head with my ability, I'm just a child.

Since I displayed such an overwhelming attitude, for about a year they'll play wait-and-see. But, as the family head of fire, if I don't show any ability, I'll just be treated as an ornamental puppet. It is one of the catalysts that caused a war in the novel. But [Origa] actively fueling the conflict in the novel could be said to be a consensus of the clan that was manipulated by the nobles.

If I were to do nothing in the war, in the current situation, the ones who can fight the new weapon developed by the neighboring country are just my father and me.

Though there are differences in ability between those who have inherited the ability of the flames, even someone who is considered inferior within the family would be considered a full-fledged magician outside. If you hold the name [Ruzil] you hold the absolute confidence of the country in your ability. It is to the point that some stupid nobles think that if the forces of neighboring countries are weakened, the [Ruzil] should be sent to break through the border.

So, normally it would be fine to just send some members of the family to assist on the battlefield, and I wouldn't have any reason to go.

Normally.

But, if it's the weapon developed for the battlefield by the neighboring country-

I think, it isn't possible for me to change my fate, or at least it's impossible for me to be become a hero.

My role, is that of the final boss.

If there is a hero, then I am the villain.

I was born to be the villain.

I look up at the night sky, showing signs of being covered by dark clouds.

CHAPTER 3

LADY OF THE INFERNO (FIRST HALF)

The soldiers on the battlefield would see on this day something beautiful and completely out of place in this harsh land- a seemingly ordinary young aristocratic woman.

“What do you think this is? This report? Do you remember?”

“Yes! It was something you ordered commander; geological features, the amount of water in the river, and the weather of the last 4 months.”

The man was ordered to make this report by this young girl, certainly he was.

Although the report had been tampered with by changing the numbers, there's no way this girl who spends all her time in a mansion could tell.

The man considered what to do with the gold he received as a reward for tampering with the data.

“Yeah, you can see just by looking that several times the amount of water described in the report is flowing in this river.”

The collapse in order in the knights on the front can be seen clearly.

If they offend the wrong person, any hope for advancement in their career would vanish completely.

This is life at the bottom, completely reliant on being fed by the hands above you.

Where the most frightening thing is the angry face of your superiors.

“It looks that way. The enemy water mages are probably controlling the water level.”

Faced with such a response, the girl drops her eyes back to the report.

It is true that the enemy has deployed magicians of water to the battlefield. For the magicians of fire that are their greatest enemy, of course they would use water to counter.

And, the magicians of that country only care about their own work. After their magic produces results, they throw all the cleanup to others. Actually, the upper echelons don't really care either, since it provides something to make the soldiers do.

"So, please report how many enemy water mages there are."

"Based on the results of the investigation, it should be about three people."

When the soldier said this information, the coppery red haired girl formed a thin smile with her mouth. Oh, how convincing. Alone, she had already confirmed, that is, that there was at least twice that number. In a conflict between magicians, even a small difference in numbers could be an insurmountable barrier.

While appearing to suppress a smile, she spoke unexpected words.

"-I understand. Keika."

"Yes!"

"On the river, there are a minimum of three times the number of water mages that were reported. Go upstream and dam the river. You have about thirty minutes. Can you do it?"

"...am I permitted to borrow some earth mages?"

"Take who you wish."

The woman in a military uniform who was following behind the girl quickly ran off without even a salutation.

For her to totally ignore the report, this wasn't what was predicted. This deployment isn't the expected result.

But why, now the additional reward is-

"Commander? What are..."

The girl's lips moved slightly.

The fake report in the girl's hand was engulfed in crimson flames.

"I would rather not be forced to terminate you guys in the middle of this war."

The red colored eyes of the "mere young girl" that slowly looked back at him, were steeped in anger.



One year has passed since I became the family head.

The neighboring country sent more troops to the border.

In other words, they have come to have a war.

The topic of the battlefield moved up in the social circles up to the highest levels.

As the day-to-day tactical situation only got worse, finally, I was sent as the family head of the Ruzil house.

With words like "the glorious stage for your first battle is ready", and encouraging me to go.

However, I was commander in name only, and they continued to interfere with me even as the situation continued to worsen.

Originally, just general magicians that were not part of any clans were sent to the battlefield, but three months ago a military base suddenly fell.

Although the magicians of the Ruzil family were dispatched in a hurry, the situation was unclear, and the geographical conditions were unfavorable. Finally, control was given to me.

The battlefield that was only a skirmish a year ago became a full scale invasion of our country.

The enemy has already taken control of the river on the front side of the fort.

At the fort known for being impregnable, the enemy is already building a bridge across the river. Past the river, the land is flat and there are no obstacles. This region is famous for its farming, and there are steep mountains between here and the territory of influential nobles, making it difficult to get reinforcements.

Reinforcement is unlikely.

No obstacles on the open plain.

Once they pass the river, it's the end.

I really want to wave a white flag.

First of all, if this "impregnable fortress" falls, the blame will fall to the commander.

According to the novel, when the magicians are deployed, this fortress would definitely not fall so easily.

...someone is definitely messing with the situation, with an extraordinary level of finesse.

Standing on the tower overlooking the area with a telescope in my hand, the amount of damage that has occurred is apparent.

The army has been churning out magic without concern.

The farms are scorched, the wells are contaminated, the soil is rough, and some of the trees are still burning.

After the farms have been damaged to this extent, recovery of the harvest will take multiple years.

In the long run, it could even influence the Royal City.

Because of all the people carefully observing my first battle, if I allow even a little more damage it would be disparaging the reputation of the Ruzil family.

If this situation is to be overturned, it must be done as quickly as possible.

This is why the trump card, the Ruzil family head, was sent.

However, while trying to deal with this, the nearby water source combined with the enemy water mages are a big problem.

To win as quickly as possible and avoid dragging out a long war, fire mages are the best.

Fire magic can quickly exhibit a large effect much more easily than other magics.

But while fire magic can be said to be the most aggressive, it's also the most affected by the environment.

Water is a very large problem for fire mages.

On a day when it rains, even lighting a match can be difficult.

That's why if a general magician is specializing in fire, they usually learn magic of the forest or earth as backup.

But because of the characteristics of the clan, [Origa] is only able to use fire magic.

As a result, I've hit a wall...

“Commander. A signal from the detached force. They’re looking for you.”

“I understand. I’ll go.”

Since I told her to clean up the river, Keika is probably asking for the support of the wind and forest mages.

Some influential people put in great effort to send much aid as possible. However, it seems there was some group interfering with the parliament, and no reinforcements were sent from either of these two clans.

I can’t help but sigh... the Vesta Marquis didn’t send any reinforcements, considering the burnt land and giving up the situation as hopeless and worthless.

For better or worse, the influential people with all their effort could only send one person.

“Here it is.”

As we approached the tent the messenger guided me to, he appeared troubled and seemed to be considering saying something.

However, since I could hear the voices loud and clear, no explanation was necessary.

“That the stronghold where the magicians were deployed fell in a single night is pretty strange, isn’t it. To hold the line here now, what benefit is there to the country? Did you guys even properly investigate what they’re doing before deciding to make a move?”

“I apologize, at this time we still don’t know the situation clearly.”

“Well then you should properly examine it, and maybe even just withdraw from the field. Doing something foolish like this is-“

A young male voice emanated from the tent, a familiar voice. One voice sounded agitated, and the other sounded genuinely disgusted.

Ehhh, how troublesome... for some reason, I feel like wrapping up his head tightly with a cloth to shut him up.

“I came here as a representative of the knight training school, just to ask you. Why did the devoted and loyal knights flee from battle? I want to know.”

Although I’m thankful that he sent reinforcements, I’m not very happy that the person dispatched was the son and heir to the clan of the forest.

It seems that he was sent to avoid various troubles linked with trying to send an official dispatch. The reason they claim he was sent is to learn on the forefront of the battle as a senior of the knight school, which is only sort of a lie.

Even though I really wanted to avoid any interaction with the hero lineup, this time it seems to be unavoidable.

.....at least Gil-sama didn’t come.

“You..”

“Long time no see, Atlas.”

It’s a reunion after a whole year, but our relationship isn’t a very friendly one. Thanks to the rumors formed at that dance a year ago, our social lives became more difficult and we’ve formed a grudge between us. It can’t be helped.

Exhaling, he stared at me for a bit, seeming surprised that I appeared here.

“The knights will not escape first. We are devoted to protect; protect the king, protect the people-“

“So? There’s no excuse for not listening.”

I reproach him with a serious face.

—It's in places like this that his personality is troublesome, even in the novel.

It was funny at the ball a year ago. Out of the cast of characters, he is the most serious, but also the least flexible.

Since he is like that, having to be polite and respectful to a younger child in public must have been hard.

While listening to his talk of chivalry, I lightly interrupted because it was likely to take too much time.

Encouraging him to sit, his mouth remained open for a moment with an awkward appearance before he shook his head and fixed his face.

"I had to postpone investigation of what happened at the last fort. Right now, what's important is defending this fort."

"I suppose..."

...alright, I've decided.

To avoid changing the story excessively, I will act as I should according to the story. To focus on the important things, Atlas put a lid on his emotions.

Precisely because he has this serious character, he became one of Gil-sama's close friends. Leaving the tent and saluting briskly, he raised his hand and relieved the soldiers waiting around there.

Confirmed that all the soldiers left, he opened his mouth.

"The enemies are abnormally fixated on that fort. For the country that supposedly has a small number of even regular magicians to send so many of them to capture this fort is insane. That it was captured so easily is also strange."

“Certainly, the number of personnel that are occupying there is abnormal.”

“If that’s the case, it’s best to figure out why as soon as possible. Perhaps there’s a valuable earth vein of magical energy. At any rate, we should take care of all the magicians in that fort in one night.”

On a normal battlefield of this scale, there would be about three magicians.

Magic is powerful, so the number of magicians is small.

Thinking about it, I’m not sure what he plans to say.

But,

“At that time, there were five magicians deployed in that fort. However, not one of them were able to send a distress signal, and determining the reason is difficult. In addition,”

The moment I tried to continue my words, I got a feeling of being entangled by magic, like having your skin rubbed the wrong way.

When I suddenly stop, the boy’s face looks a bit confused, but he doesn’t say anything.

“No... thinking about this won’t recapture the fort. We can’t afford to waste hours on this. Unless this is settled before winter the farmers will suffer.”

“Winter is the king here, is it.”

While speaking, I felt an invisible magic prickling at me, making it difficult to say certain words.

Although the mage is still an apprentice, and is low ranked on this battlefield, he has one skill-

Eavesdropping, tampering, disturbance of magic-

The disarray among the allies is severe enough that it's impossible to tell who the traitor is.

"I won't stay still. Because that's my duty."

Leaving the tent and looking around, I felt that the invisible presence was still.

Elusive as a rat, and impossible to tell who it is. How should I deal with him...

Thinking about the annoyance, I clicked my tongue.



Within the letter of proxy from the knight training school, words stating that Atlas would be serving as an official knight were signed by the director of the school.

And, walking through the camp, his eyes shined with excitement.

"My father told me to come and assist however possible. What should I do?"

"Just don't do anything. Knights and soldiers are already waiting in the back. As if we would ask a knight apprentice to do something."

The words struck him like a punch.

Well, so it happens. He came excitedly to do as his father requested, his hand on his sword, desiring to show his worth as the senior of the training school.

Coming with a strong feeling of pride.

But.

"I asked for Harvester-sama, not some knight apprentice."

Having requested an excellent magician, they were completely uninterested in him. Although he was sent for training only as a pretense, those on the battlefield viewed it as the actual reason and treated him as a child.

Stay in the back to protect the people; it was clearly a useless action that would have no effect on the current situation.

Magicians; brutal, cruel, and the ones who have control.

“While you protect a single person with your sword, magic will fell ten of the enemy’s men.”

“Are you insulting the knights?!”

“Of course not, we magicians don’t have the numbers to take care of a situation ourselves, and we rely on the knights. All I’m saying is that there’s the right person for the right job, that kind of thing. You get it?”

The depression of the future marquis of the Harvester clan was unabated. Similar to how [Origa] was entirely focused on strengthening her magic, he was completely focused on training in the knight school.

Since that’s also how he was in the novel, it’s not a surprise. However,

“This is the battlefield. You are not yet a real knight.”

Although the great magic clans have begun to decline, the pressure upon the future head is undeniably huge.

Once he finds a path different than his father, it’s understandable that he will want to escape that way.

The path he discovers in the story, is that of joining the heroes.

But, here on this battlefield, he shouldn’t appear at all. That’s why,

“This is not the place for a knight apprentice.”

“...then, if I were a magician?”

Here is this man’s theme in the novel, huh.

Should he be a knight, or should he be a magician.

In the original, this conflict is what Gil-sama helped him with.

For the villain to point it out in a place like this would be improper.

But, it’s absolutely necessary to get these people to help with the defense, so it can’t be avoided.

“I already gave instructions to dam the river, and the amount of water flowing has been reduced considerably. What I want, is for Atlas-sama to get rid of what is left. Use the trees on the banks of the river to absorb all the water, to help shield this side of the river from the heat.”

Though it was arranged for the river to be blocked, even the gently flowing water left over is still a danger to my magic. The fact that the signal was sent means that this is the limit of what they can do with a dam. In a situation where there is water around, even a small mistake can allow for the enemy magicians to drown out my flames.

That is why, I must make this request.

“You only need to start absorbing the water once I move, since otherwise it’d be a hassle.”

“...how, when I am just one person?”

“Using fire will damage the land no matter what. If possible, I would at least like to reduce the damage done. Because of that, feel free to take the other two magicians of the forest we have.”

What I can use, is only fire.

It's the way the setting has been since the beginning.

That's why, the only options I have are burn or not burn.

"The protection, it can probably stretch further."

"Of course it can. But, it's useless if the fort is burned down. That's why I want to concentrate it there."

"Burn down the fort?"

I ignore the surprised voices. The standing messenger soldiers take a deep breath.

—Now, is when I make my resolution.

"Commander. Do we request that the enemy return our civilians?"

"There's no problem with the low number people that are trapped there, so it's unnecessary. After all- they'll just become ashes."

CHAPTER 4

LADY OF THE INFERNO (SECOND HALF)

The magicians have already been deployed along the border of the fort.

The enemy soldiers have been detecting making abnormal movements.

In this area, there are no important resources.

Normally it would be impossible to tell why the soldiers were deployed here.

However, I can easily imagine the flow of the world as the hero grows in the background.

That's why, the "villain" of this story must be me.

"Those who can use forest magic should stay in the back and support Atlas-sama. I do not need escorts."

"It will be dangerous, Origa-sama!"

"It would just be a bother. Since you'll just burn if you're next to me."

I remove the string tying my hair and adjust the collar of my uniform.

Since I have to concentrate now, I'd prefer to remove as many distracting factors as possible.

"Hey..."

Giving instructions as I walk, they quickly move to their posts, ignoring the person who objected. The knights who had been following in the back, one after another moved off to follow their instructions.

Even if they disagree with me, they will still obey- after all, if they don't, they're the ones that will burn.

"A signal will be sent when I finish invoking the magic. Because I don't know how precisely I can control it, be sure to use the water to stop the spread of any fire as quickly as possible."

Although I don't think it will happen, it would be bad if I collapsed from overuse of magic.

Even though I have practiced to the extreme, I have yet to see the bottom of the talent of [Origa] .

It's questionable whether or not I would be burned by a flame I created myself.

The thought that I'm treating this as an experiment passes through my mind.

Indeed,

A villain is a villain.

"Any questions? If not, move to your positions."

"Hey, wait! The victims are too excessive. There are many non-combatants along the border; to attack like this contradicts the point!"

My arm is forcefully pulled back, and I see his eyes dark with anger.

As I look around, all those who rejected the instructions divert their eyes slightly.

But right now I don't have time, and while feeling irritated, and with my eyes furrowed slightly from the pain of my arm being squeezed, I speak the supposed facts.

"The measures I take are certainly not welcome. Methods that deviate from the path. But, the reason I was called here is because His Majesty demanded that we break through as soon as possible."

“...the magicians who were in the fort may have been captured. Ensuring the safety of the magicians is also the wish of His Majesty.”

“They’ve been there for three months. They may not be alive anymore, and even if a deal is offered- it’s too late.”

As quickly as possible, defend the country.

By simply saying that it is the command of the King and that I am only trying to follow it, it becomes impossible to overturn, even by a group of people.

Claiming that priority should be given to protecting the magicians isn’t enough to stop my actions.

Nevertheless, he opened his mouth.

“For what reason did we not issue a warning to the enemy soldiers? They too have families that they are trying to protect. If they are being forced to recklessly sacrifice themselves they will leave by themselves eventually.”

It’s a sound argument. Such a thing has been proven.

But, only a hero can defend everything in such a beautiful way.

As for me, I can’t do such a thing.

I recall my former self, in love with the figures of the heroes.

The [me] in his eyes, I wonder what it looks like?

“Do you not wish to make a wall? If you don’t care about protecting the land, then you should at least care about protecting the lives of the civilians that live here.”

I sigh loudly, and free my arm while smiling. An [Origa] like smile, a smile to dismiss anyone else conscious of what I am doing.

A smile to hide my fear, to avoid being mocked, to avoid their sympathy.

So that no one here will carry any sin, other than me.

“Atlas Ville Harvester. The commander of this strategy is me. The right to make decisions does not lie with you. This victory will be under my name.”

As well as the corpses; all the grudges will be on [Origa] .

“Burned away at maximum power- if you claim your role is to protect to people, stand back and defend from my fire.”



The trees absorbed water and grew at an unusual speed, forming a wall while drying up the river. A far cry from the original color of the tree, a semi-transparent wall was quickly formed.

“As expected.”

Controlling the abnormal growth causes a constant tension, requiring focus similar to balancing on a tightrope, it seems.

It would be very hard to maintain constant growth and avoid collapse with just water.

However, after being incorporated into the trees, the water mages cannot use it.

The wall continued to grow until it seemed like it would collapse under its own weight, and nothing was left for the water mages.

Thus, my stage has been prepared.

I stood on a rock overlooking the fort, watching the enemy base.

You can't see the people in the enemy territory very well from here.

The number of people there, is impossible to tell.

It seems that the enemy magicians noticed our movement; I felt the prickle on my skin from some large scale magic being built.

Magic for protection, or magic for attack.

Either way, they won't be able to stop the attack of [Origa] .

I don't have time to indulge in sentimentality.

I close my eyes and breathe in deeply, consolidating the image of flames in my mind.

At the very least, I can make sure they suffer as little as possible.

With the feeling of magic leaving my body all at once, a shiver goes down my spine.

In burning flames, I wrapped the opposite shore.



It began to rain, falling on the flickering remnants of a fire.

The rain falling on the heated earth evaporates, blocking the view.

The rain falling on me robs the heat from my strangely warm body.

The power of my magic fully unleashed for the first time was tremendous. Rather than a battle between magicians, it was more like pure power used for destruction.

The opposite side of the river is completely turned to charcoal, and even some trees in the wall Atlas made are burned.

[Origa] is, should still be, growing.

It's because of my dedicated training; originally [Origa] should not yet have this volume of magical power.

When I dragged my strangely heavy body down the hill, the soldiers lined up in ranks seemed a little stunned.

Other than the sound of harsh breathing, it was completely silent.

In the eyes that surrounded me, I saw fear, awe, and within both a bit of hatred.

I think I heard someone quietly mutter “monster”.

“....soldiers. Tactical situation, report.”

As I look around, nobody meets my eyes.

Although I don't know who the traitors are, in this situation, I doubt they would lie to me.

The visibility was low, but the soldiers who went reported without complaint.

“The river has completely dried, but it should go back to normal eventually. Regarding the fort that was occupied, we did not find any enemies remaining.”

“I appreciate your efforts. Contain the heat within fifteen minutes. Without the horses, go secure the area on the other side of the river. Distribute signal lights between the groups... Atlas-sama, please create a bridge across the river.”

Losing my balance in the middle of speaking, my legs fail to support me. The voices of the soldiers become vague buzzing and do not enter my ears. My breath quickens a bit. A wry smile came to my face as I concentrated on not showing the panic I was feeling.

Because magic overuse causes a mental load, I need rest.

When I try to stand up again somehow, someone grabs my hand and pulls me up.

Raising my eyes to say thanks, the confused gaze of Atlas comes into view- my heart aches.

“U..m.... you...”

“...I’m fine. I just used too much magic and need to rest a little.”

Seeing the flickering presence of a hero within him, I wish that I was invisible.

I divert my eyes while moving my legs and quietly murmuring thanks, without any power behind it.

Without any resistance, my arm that was grabbed slips from his hands.

Hearing the soldiers call for his help with building the bridge, Atlas moved off, and as I advanced step by step towards my tent, I noticed a patch of hot air shimmering.

Not a natural movement, but movement caused by wind magic.

It seems someone saw my disgrace; I clicked my tongue at the fluctuation.

“Thanks for your hard work, Rat-san.”

With those quiet words whispered in passing, the body of an unfamiliar nondescript young soldier trembled.



When I next woke up, the first thing I heard was a yell.

“Hey you! Wait!”

The sky was dyed red when the aftereffects of the magic finally subsided, and a young boy around my age ran into the tent.

Somehow getting past the guards, the boy arrived in front of me.

Wearing simple clothing and unstyled hair- while my consciousness blurred and I wondered why a villager was in the tent, the boy screamed.

“Why! Why did you kill Sasha! Murderer!”

“We apologize Origa-sama! The boy is distraught.”

“Get off me!”

The panicked guards held the boy back and tried to pull him out of the tent, although I wasn’t really sure why. I blame it on my mind still being rather unclear.

As the guards held the boy back, he continued to shout as tears fell from his eyes.

“You people never bothered to come before the fort was attacked! Even when the crops failed, or there was famine, you ignored us! Don’t claim you were fighting for us, you were fighting for yourselves! Why, why.. the only reason Sasha died is because you came!”

That on the border, there was only military personnel, is certainly not something I believed.

The side effect of the passage of time.

Merchants and others who traveled across the border, probably started a simple inn which attracted more settlers.

Among those I burned to death, there were certainly civilians.

Surely, this boy’s friend was such a person.

—Whatever the reason that I killed his friend, a part of his life has been forever burned and scarred.

A wound that will never disappear was forced upon him.

That hatred should all be directed to [Origa] .

Because of that, I must become [Origa] .

“...Yes. You’re right. I didn’t do this for you guys. Since it was my first battle, do I not have to make it spectacular?”

I say these words and close my eyes, and the boy curses me with a voice filled with anger.

A voice the exact opposite of the voices of praise I was bathed in a year ago, but I feel more relief than pain.

That’s it. That’s the correct reaction.

I’m a monster.

I’m a butcher.

I’m a villain.

That’s why, for the future of that person-

The guards drag the boy out of the tent, and I tell them not to punish him too severely. The guards smile in relief, and promise not to tell.

“Apparently, there were exchanges with the villages within the enemy territory.”

“...yes, it seems so.”

A gentle breeze shakes the flaps of the tents.

The scorched scent travels surprisingly far, I note.

CHAPTER 5

THAT PRECIOUS SPRING, AND, (FIRST HALF)

The garden is covered by patternless white snow.

A shimmering flame burns in the fireplace, keeping the cold air out of the room.

Although I love the cold, my physical condition is too poor.

As February passes, I continue to stay in my room, watching the flow of time slowly change the landscape outside.

Though I stay here, I really need to go out among the social circles and face the problems to come, whether my body is ready or not.

I rubbed the clouded window with my hand while sighing, and noticed the reflection of the chamberlain opening the door with a grim expression.

“Origa-sama. How are you feeling?”

“Just okay. What is going on?”

“Someone has come to visit...”

Since many people flocked to visit, normally they would be politely refused, meaning this must be someone important enough that the chamberlain felt refusing would be a bad idea.

Although usually I feel that her behavior is overprotective, recently I felt thankful for it.

If the heart is unstable, magic too will be unstable and difficult to use.

I don’t know how much it takes to completely lose control of your magic.

Anyways, currently rest is necessary for me.

“Yes.. I’m sorry, but can you tell them that I’m not currently in a state where I can meet visitors?”

“But it’s... Harvester-sama’s son.”

Without even having to hear his name, my expression becomes strained.



“I apologize for my appearance.”

“No, it’s my fault for visiting out of the blue.”

After passing through the study and tidying up the room a little, Atlas handed me a bouquet as a visiting gift.

A collection of vividly colored flowers that grow only in the spring, ignoring the fact that it is currently winter.

It probably wouldn’t be hard to seduce any woman with the ability to give her beautiful bouquets of flowers no matter what the season using magic.

I mean, unlike the Ruzil family whose magic is only used to destroy, it’s the first time I’ve seen magic used for something simple and positive.

After conveying my surprise that the heir to the forest clan would visit, he replied shortly that it was for business.

“Feeling bad?”

“My body wasn’t quite ready to use magic on that level... did you not also have problems?”

It seems I hit the bullseye; I felt the urge to laugh at the appearance of Atlas sullenly furrowing his eyebrows.

Compared to fire magic, magic of the forest requires far more detailed control; he probably couldn’t stand at all for a while.

Anyways, I offered him a chair, and asked if he would like some tea.

Only the sound of water pouring, and the aroma of tea filled the space.

As we sat face-to-face, his gaze wandered as if he was hesitating over something. We quietly waited for the first word to be spoken in a peaceful atmosphere.

The reason behind his visit, I wasn't actually interested in.

Maybe his large sense of justice as a friend of the hero, or the fate of the magicians.

He shouldn't have noticed anything about the battlefield. He can't have noticed.

He should only be visiting because he felt suspicious, and not because he was confident about something.

—but if he does end up realizing it, the longer it takes, the better.

That kind of battle shouldn't have occurred originally.

There were no magicians sacrificed at this stage.

That's why, it may be impossible to follow the story to the end.

What I interfered with was only the timing of Origa becoming family head and sending Gil-sama away, it shouldn't have a large influence on the country.

Yet, the deployment came far too soon, and not knowing the reason sends a chill down my back.

Perhaps, did I make a mistake?

"In that fort, there were too many magician's corpses."

In the end, what he spoke of was exactly what I expected.

The magicians of our country who died in that fort, and the enemy magicians who I burned.

He was worried about the future of the magicians of this country.

“Expensive slaves perhaps. They’re not from our country. Perhaps they were used to raise that fort. But”

Ah, I have nothing but worries.

Hopefully, there won’t be any effect on the development of the heroes.

Surely, it’s only the timing that was affected.

Surely.

“Without the method to restrain magicians, it’s impossible for normal people to hold magicians, but the method for restraining mages is studied only here in our country, is it not? ...I’m currently investigating the same thing you are.”

He turned his brown eyes to me with a strained look on his face. His eyes, filled with growing embarrassment, made me feel confused about the difference between what I remember [he] should be like and the current him.

The eyes [he] looks at me with, should be filled with more hatred and suspicion.

I wonder if I have affected Atlas by being too close to him.

“You knew?”

“Indeed. So?”

I had known when I took action that it would have some effect on the development of the world.

However, it's moving even faster than I expected.

I may not know in detail what is occurring on the hero's side, but I do know that behind the scenes, the conspiracy is acting.

Even though the shadows are moving faster than I expected after my destruction of the fort, I still know the direction the conspiracy is going to flow.

My mouth already feels dry even though I'm in the middle of drinking tea.

"You should understand that the enemy is researching a method to neutralize magicians, and used it to their advantage on that battlefield."

Silence fell in the room, weighing down the atmosphere.

"Keika, please get me some more tea."

Of course, Keika is aware of the rough version of the investigation results. However, this is something I can't tell her.

Keika drew her eyebrows closer together for a moment, but silently left the room.

Feeling the fluctuation of her magical power receding, I whispered to Atlas under my breath.

"It was the day I was introduced to the battlefield. Even if they panicked and moved quickly, the contents of the experiment should not have been fully salvaged. How much of the information they saved, I don't know, but I did what I could."

Although it resulting in me falling to this state, I burned everything on the site as thoroughly as I could. Even with the spy placed on this side, they shouldn't have managed to recover all the experimental data.

“...You didn’t report that.”

“Because I don’t know who the traitor is. You, too, should be aware of his existence?”

My face was reflected on the tea in my cup; a childish face that still appears undependable— the face of a child who is not yet even twelve years old, but no one will mock.

Children who are and will be the heads of the magic clans, the hands that defend the country and are the symbols of magicians.

—The premature departure, might have been caused by me.

“You and me have both been monitored. However, we can’t act carelessly since we don’t know who’s behind the spy.... It could be someone with a high position.”

Because originally Origa would inherit the estate at fifteen years of age, some magicians died who would not have died in the original.

I, delaying the report like this, could cause more people to die.

My trembling hands disturb the surface of the tea, and I hide my anxious face behind a facade.

“Without magic, this country is ruined. What idiots they are... tch.”

Atlas growled with a resentful voice.

Finally, finally, the world began to move.

Around the magicians, a story of the right to rule. The story of the future of the kingdom and the magicians.

That's why, it is not my desire to resolve this conspiracy. That task belongs to the heroes of the story.

However, I'll just lend a hand where I can.

This last time, I will be involved with Atlas.

After all, I'm sure that he's also suffering.

"It was around a year ago, the Washels Company was first established. Looking at the numbers they appear to be a wholesome group, but their involvement with the aristocracy is a bit suspicious. Could you investigate it for me?"

"So because if you or your father were to show any movement, they would destroy all the evidence, you're asking me, is it?"

"That's right. But, I would prefer to rely on someone who doesn't spend all their time inside."

As I handed over the data that I collected, he stared at me with his dark brown eyes, question my true intentions.

A person like him, who can pave his path with belief, definitely won't be able to understand.

His straightforwardness reminds me of Gil-sama, and because of the emotions born somewhere in the corner of my mind, a small smile was stuck on my face.

"In the current situation, I can only rely on you guys."

"The Ruzil."

"...Come on. The relationships in my family move based on power. The situation will only change if I show promise. If I want to hold the position of family head for many years then I need to do this."

Of this, Keika is a good example.

She doesn't actually trust me, and only follows me because of my power.

That's why she betrayed father, for me.

I do not trust her either, even though I rely on her- after all, she isn't a character that appeared in the novel.

Unless a character was working to help Gil-sama, I have no reason to trust them.

Even if it's someone who vowed their life to me.

"...Please be assured. Considering the things they are researching, it is my responsibility to investigate it. However, are you sure about asking the people of the Harvester clan to aid you in betraying their own country?"

"—I understand. I'll speak of this report to my father."

He avoided responding to my question, and while thinking about the conversation that had been suddenly ended, I closed my eyes.

CHAPTER 6

THAT PRECIOUS SPRING, AND, (SECOND HALF)

While we conveyed information, the sun began to descend.

Perhaps realizing that the time left that they could speak privately was almost over, he opened his mouth doubtfully.

“When spring comes, I’ll be going to the battlefield in earnest.”

“Eh?”

By those words, I was startled for a moment.

Although the fighting on the border has intensified in the wake of that battle, it should not yet be at the state of sending our full force yet.

That should be far later in the story.

Even as the enemy begins to research that technology, there’s still a margin in national power between the countries.

It’s another problem.

“If a knight were to go onto the battlefield at the age of sixteen, wouldn’t that be a problem?”

“Training can only go so far. I have learned all I can through studying. What’s left is to go onto the field, whether as a knight or a magician.”

“...is, that so?”

If it was just Atlas’s choice, I would have no problem with it.

However, considering the age of Gil-sama, this is too early.

If he were to take the option of being a magician and earnestly learn magic at this time, would the trusting relationship with Gil-sama be impossible to build?

—amusing. After all, it's amusing.

The story is completely diverting from the original.

"I think that that thing will definitely be used on this battlefield too.

....I'll leave this place to you. But, I still have things I want to say as a knight apprentice."

His stiff voice pulls me from my thoughts.

Not as a magician, but as an apprentice knight- what could it be?

I stared at his brown eyes, as he spoke while seeming to taste each word carefully.

"I find you unpleasant. Showing off your power, and oppressing the weak."

His formerly hidden feelings were directly communicated, gouging deep wounds in my heart.

But, this is how [Origa] should be; the only difference is that he's exposed his thoughts.

It's because of my own actions. Because of the sins I've committed.

"...is it, because of Gilford Ivlis. Or..."

Is it because of the people I baked in that battle?

Whether he guessed my unspoken words, his low voice answered.

"They were problems that could have been solved without sacrifice if you didn't rush them. Both Gil and that fort."

If he recognizes my actions towards Gil-sama, that means he's had a chance to talk to Gil-sama about his origins.

So, that's why he was so hostile towards me on our first meeting.

I see.

Since more than a year has passed since he returned to the last name of Ivlis, it seems he and Atlas formed a relationship to some extent.

Then, that he decided his future so quickly may not be a problem?

"No matter how much time passes, it's impossible that he would become an existence worthy of the Ruzil name. And, that victory, as I mentioned earlier, was partially for my own sake. I used the methods I believed were best."

"And how many lives could have been saved? You're just doing what you want and calling it correct."

His sharp gaze stabbed at me, causing my heart to beat heavily.

Eyes full of righteousness, honest feelings, taking the straight path.

Facing the questions and answers that shouldn't occur for another few years, that could cause a distortion in the story, my heart becomes cold again- this question-and-answer session with [Origa] should occur just before the destruction of the country.

Impossible. This should be impossible.

Because, I will not aid in the attack on this country.

Yet, there is no clear path that will lead to the best outcome.

But the way [Origa] will answer is already determined.

To answer in any other way, is impossible.

“For me to deny those sacrifices, would it not be blasphemy against the dead? —My choice is not wrong.”

The commander is the one who should shoulder the sins of their subordinates.

In order to not waste the lives that I already robbed, I must continue to reach ahead to justify my actions.

In order to keep my subordinates from having doubts, I must continue moving forwards.

So, I will not be shaken. I am a villain.

I will not be the weak [me] . I must be [Origa] .

The emotions in my heart, I will not reveal.

“....I am well aware, of how full of idealism my words are. But, I will not forgive you, because I am someone who aspires to become a knight.”

I look away from his gaze, and sigh.

I know it well.

As the villain, my aim and his were different from the beginning. Understanding each other is impossible.

But, what I already knew won't change anything.

My actions are obvious, even as his harsh gaze causes my heart to hurt.

It may hurt, but that won't stop time from flowing.

For a villain to calmly be listening to words of condemnation from a hero, such a comical scene would never occur if I was the real [Origa] .

“—But. I understand the position of a magician. It wasn’t just people in the fort that you destroyed..... And, in hindsight, you may have been protecting Gil.”

“Eh..?”

“Considering the way of the Ruzil family, if you didn’t choose to banish Gil from the clan like that, it’s highly likely he would have died.”

Indeed, other than the Ruzil family the other clans are developing on a more liberal path.

Meaning that they will slowly lose the power of magic that is tied to the blood of the family.

The number of magicians that are born will decline quickly, and then magicians will no longer be the main force of this country.

The family head is still bound by bloodline, but other than in the Ruzil family the magicians belonging to the sept can marry freely.

That’s why, in any of the other clans they would have allowed someone like Gil-sama.

But, Gil-sama is a seed of the head of the Ruzil family.

“I... don’t think that you took your actions without any reason. And, I think there were... some circumstances around Gil. And, in the first place, it’s a problem between you and Gil, not me.”

Hesitantly, with a low voice as if he’s talking to himself, Atlas disrupts my mind.

So, I tried to help Gil-sama— because I love him.¹

And, around me are circumstances— because I want to live.

—What am [I] thinking?

Causing my emotions to change so drastically.

Disgusting. Dis, gusting.

“So, I apologize. At that time, I said some harsh things. Sorry.”

“I also, did more than was necessary. I apologize.”

I mask my face with a smile to hide my nausea.

Is he speaking to [Origa] or [Me] ?

My head empties except for Atlas’s words, spinning around in my head.

Quickly, quickly, I want to finish this conversation.

“And, Gil is doing well with us, so you don’t have to worry about him. Because he has been completely separated from the Ruzil, nobody is trying to do anything to him.”

“Even if what you say is true, I am still Gil’s sister.”

I am for Gil-sama, for mother, for the clan, for the magicians.

It’s already enough.

I don’t want to think anymore. No more.

“I know I ruined your reputation at that time. I know that it was the wrong thing to do. Nevertheless, my father... no, I promise that if you trust me then I will repay that trust.”

As I harden my face once again and prepare more words of apology, he speaks again, with a voice that seemed to fade into nothing.

“Can we... become friends?”

—The emotions wriggling deep inside me stopped my movement.

“Friends.”

I speak the word with a dumbfounded voice, and Atlas awkwardly averts his gaze.

The words enter my ears, but the meaning and sound don't connect in my mind.

He stood there, appearing to have no intention of clarifying his words.

Really, what an absurdly straightforward person.

Because he wants to believe, he believes.

Because he wants to forgive, he forgives.

Because, he wants to be friends.

Like the mindset of a child.

Really, such simple relationships only happen in stories; reality is much uglier.

I'm not the kind of person that should be one of his friends.

He's on the list of characters who I should definitely not become friends with.

The various ways I can reply with pass through my head as I think about what the best response is.

I bring my cup of tea to my mouth to hide my face, and my faintly trembling lips.

“So? I don't have anything left to say.”

“...I.. it’s the first time I’ve made a friend.”

He was dumbfounded for a moment, and then his mouth opened, and he laughed uncontrollably.

The alarm of reason, that I shouldn’t get close to him, was unable to stop my heart.

—In the future, I would regret ignoring this alarm.

From there, every day was full of small joys.

Marquis Harvester and Atlas visited occasionally, and we had many pointless conversations.

Their presence healed my body and mind, and my magic was certainly stable.

But finally, the return of spring brought with it a return to the defense.



As I prepare to visit the King before returning to the battlefield, I am notified of a visitor.

I enter the parlor in a good mood, and see a woman combing her rich golden hair.

I run to her and hug her while smiling, and she laughs while stroking my coppery hair with pale white hands.

“Mother! It’s been a while. Are you fine without that person?”

“Long time no see, Origa. I came by to say hello because I heard that you would be leaving for the war soon. Because it was too shocking a story, he stayed behind.”

Because I asked father to accompany mother’s medical treatment to keep his influence away, we haven’t really been able to meet.

If I were to visit, the eyes of society would change how they viewed my father.

But, even though she's sickly and in a position with strong overlap with my previous life, she took good care of me.

I mean, she's almost—

“Origa?”

“Seeing you, mother, makes me really happy.”

“Oh? I thought you were all grown up, but I guess you're still a child.”

We continued to exchange banter, speaking of the things that happened to us over the last year.

The meeting with the King after succession, that I asked Keika to escort me, and then met Marquis Harvester, and Atlas refused to dance, and now, he's my friend.

Remembering the fun memories, I spoke happily as my mother laughed and we conversed for a while.

And hearing stories about failed magic, strange fashions among the nobles, and funny experiences with foreign food, I felt a natural smile come to my face.

Being able to enjoy talking with my mother like this, this is the first time.

“This is the first time I've seen you having so much fun.”

“Mother?”

To meet my mother, this is the first time after a year.

Her beauty is the same as it was, as the time comes to speak farewell once again.

She told me not to worry about taking the role of family head from her husband, and that he sent his daughter a hug.

I don't have words left; she was concerned about me even in this situation.

Being worried about by my mother like this, I don't remember ever happening in my previous life.

So what?

Part of me is embarrassed about being fussed over like this, another pleased, and another wants to avoid giving her anything else to worry about. And, thinking.

One day, [I] want to do something for this person.

"Because you're constantly languishing over things, I was worried."

But, I've already made a friend, and she smiled and continued.

While stroking my copper hair, she whispered in a thin voice.

"I'm praying, that you guys can become happy."

So my mother said with a smile, and I was shaken.

With a fleeting smile on her pale face, aware her time had come, she cast her eyes down.



My mother's funeral was carried out in the Imperial City.

The King offered flowers, and many nobles followed suit, surrounding her tomb with flowers.

I'm sure she would love it.

I'm sure that I was the only one who didn't know, that my mother was well liked.

Many people mourned her death as being too soon.

Many people believed she was one of the most beautiful people while she was alive.

Even the King, learning that his relative died, appeared a little thinner, as he stood with a pensive face.

I merely looked silently, and played the role of chief mourner.

People visited one by one, and the voices of those who shed tears passed by my ears, one by one.

That all I can do for her is shed tears— it weighs heavily on my neck.

And to tell the truth, I don't remember much of the day of the funeral.

But, I do remember a little.

As I prayed to the grave of my mother, Atlas visited, along with his father.

The letter he gave me silently, containing words of consolation, was from my brother.

Really, I don't even know why I remembered such a thing.

When I don't even remember what it said.

Before I even realized it, I was burning it, and I was unable to read its contents.

I think Father looked at it and said something, but I think that I was laughing?

I don't remember.

....I strongly feel that I didn't want to remember, and so I didn't remember.

And my father disappeared to the border that day.

CHAPTER 7

A NIGHT OF ENTREATIES

To reach this point, took a long time.

But, from here I believe it will be much easier.

I released those feelings with a sigh lacking any power.

Providing information to other countries, establishing a dummy company for human trafficking of magicians.

On top of that, field trials of weapons in actual combat.

Reducing the amount of criminal activity is impossible, because the number of supporters is too many.

Whether they're caught, arrested, assassinated, or exterminated, new helpers appear one after the other.

And after following links to the root through assiduous searching— I found the most unexpected person.

Whether it was like this from the start or if I changed who it was by rushing fate, I don't know.

In any case, a different situation has come about compared to my memories.

Even if I don't know, I've already found the side character in question.

And...

"Foolish, aren't you, Margrave Hiedrichs."

The man trussed up and gagged on the floor rolled over and looked calmly at me.

Although I briefly wondered if I should drug him too, it's probably not really necessary.

Even if he somehow manages to call for help, it won't matter since everyone else is already asleep.

With a click, a small flame began on a bookshelf, and the smell of smoke began to spread.

My copper colored hair, reflected in the full length mirror propped against the wall, shined in the light of the fire.

For the prodigious child of fire, the Princess of the Inferno, it's truly the suitable appearance. The suitable age.

I had been impatient to catch up to the age of [Origa] , but it's good that I can get rid of this guy before that.

"In the middle of the night, the mansion owned by the Margrave of sugar processing unexpectedly burned down. Everyone in the house was... unfortunately caught in the fire.I suppose the report to the King tomorrow will be something like that."

A snap, and the flame began to spread, and the smell of burnt books began to fill the room.

Although I can quickly burn the house all at once, there is no need since it doesn't seem like there is any active resistance.

Allowing nature to slowly burn down the mansion means I need to carefully watch and ensure there are no survivors, but— it can't be helped.

After hearing that the Margrave burned to death, [Origa] is the first person many will think of.

But although they will be suspicious, if there are no traces of magic, they won't be able to confirm their suspicions.

“Well, it’ll take some time before the fire spreads all the way through the mansion. Would you like to have a casual chat?Oh, you can’t speak like this. One second.”

While coughing a little, I removed the leather bindings that were keeping him unable to move.

That other than magic, I have no skill in martial arts is well known.

Although he’s a famous military soldier who has been strengthened with drugs, he doesn’t seem to intend to attack this frail fourteen year old girl.

It seems like, from the beginning, he had no intention to resist me?

The Margrave slowly turns around and overlooks the room, and then sighs.

“

“Is there anything you want to ask? Since I went to all this effort, I’ll answer anything.”

“The drugs. Used on everyone in the mansion.”

“They’re sleeping pills. Since it wasn’t poison, they can all die without suffering in their sleep.”

“I see.”

He seemed resigned, as he let out a sigh of relief. I don’t trust him.

I didn’t know who was involved with his actions.

That’s why, I decided to get rid of anyone who could was involved with him.

A man, a woman, the maid, the gardener, the cook, the guards, and even a child not yet fully aware of the world.

Nobody is going to escape from this house alive, but after having said as much, the Margrave is too calm.

“How did you figure out it was me? I was careful to leave no conclusive evidence.”

“.....contrived. None of the evidence was conclusive, so I just burned it.”

The evidence that Keika tracked down in a year was insufficient to crush him if it was brought to light.

His roots were too deep, and Harvester-sama’s support wouldn’t have been able to make enough of a difference.

If I were to reveal what I had found, all the evidence would quickly be disposed of.

Therefore, it’s better to just burn it.

“Here’s a question. Why do you think it was so easy to catch my tail?”

“.....”

“If I was seriously trying to hide, you never would have found me. Your strong point is your intelligence, so you should be able to figure out why.”

If he expected to be caught, he would have been by himself, rather than be exterminated along with his family like right now.

With even a little bit of investigation, the fact that he is a man that loves his family comes out immediately.

Why was such a man willing to sacrifice both himself and his family just to lure me out?

Did he want to make a deal with me or tell me something?

Either way, it’s best not to ignore what he wants to say.

I encouraged him to tell me, and he responded in a voice so quiet it was almost silent.

“Everything was for this country.”

What was set in his eyes as he looked up was resolution.

“Because there is a [monster] like you, the number of people committed to magic will increase. And everyone, will refuse to progress.”

He believes that [Origa] is the problem.

The magician who defends the country with rare talent.

That I am obstructing the nation’s development.

“I saw the way other countries function. With unexpected capability and hard work, to compensate with technology, they continue to grow. And what about our country? Committed to bloodlines that refuse to develop, we continue to decline. It’s fine right now because you’re here, but if you were gone the country would immediately collapse.That’s why, they intend to get rid of you.”

“For the sake of the future, is it.”

His thoughts, are not incorrect.

This country that relies fully on magic, it’s development is too slow to keep up with the countries of technology.

In this situation, where this country reliant on the force of magic is having the blood of the magicians slowly wane, it’s likely to collapse in the near future.

Considering the future, nothing is more of a barrier to progress than a heaven gifted young mage as a symbol of the old era.

People cling to such a symbol, and ignore objections while rejecting progress.

Even if I’m the strongest fire mage, the fate of this country can only be to decline as the total number of mages continues to decrease.

I am concerned about the effects— as it stands, many people ignore it and pretend it isn’t happening.

“Although I was certain you were part of the boycott faction, from the way you speak it seems different?”

“...No. It’s true that I dislike magic. Everyone, more or less believes it in their hearts. Magicians,”

As he spoke the words, even while choking on smoke, a distorted smile spread on his lips.

[Magicians are not humans.]

I am aware of this idea about magicians, and that its spread is the global trend.

An inhuman presence, the minority, beings with excessive power.

The spread of the idea that they should be eliminated, caused by someone’s planning, seems like it’s a natural thing.

I don’t know who started this idea, but it was quickly accepted by the majority of people, somewhere in their minds.

That’s why.

“As I thought, this was not part of their plan, merely the efforts of one or two people.”

While a warrior kills one person, a magician can kill ten.

But, without magic, they’re just ordinary humans.

If cut or stabbed, they die as easily as any other person.

The development of weapons that dampen the power of magicians is impossible without the assistance of this country, which has the majority of magicians— and, the people of this country are beginning to tilt towards eliminating the magicians.

So, on the border, it isn’t just that one noble that was leaking confidential information.

“Absorb the magic, and then seal it with the array. The magic sealing stone. However, I believe it is still in the testing stage, and practical use is still being considered.”

“....Indeed. Again and again, situations will occur where you are forced to use your full strength. Of waiting for change, I have had enough.”

These last few years.

Every time the king orders magicians to go to the battlefield, there are an increasing number of victims.

While moving and moving just to get through the situation, the situation continues to escalate, and the battlefields become more messy.

More and more the magicians become necessary and are sent to more battles— in these three years, even the intermediate magicians have been forced into an unfavorable situation.

“I do not think I am insane for rejecting the magicians. —We and the king both hate them dearly.”

“”

“Well, that’s how it is.”

The king’s participation in the development of the weapons following the death of my mother, is far too obvious.

Without my mother who was a large part of the guardian families, any hesitation he had left probably vanished.

Trapping the magicians with a war. Intentionally miscommunicating information. Failing to transport goods. Betrayal by allies.

The original Origa runs wild, and the country is lit up with the flames of revolt.

From the heroes' point of view, for the mass of malice against the magicians— the mastermind, the head, is the king.

I can only think of it as madness to hunt down the magicians with the current state of this country.

What drove him to commit such folly, what the king is thinking, I do not know.

But, I don't want to know.

It's not my story.

"If we magicians did not fight, this country would fall immediately. We have no natural resources, not many people, not even a strong army. Nothing but magic. But, you guys fail to accept this reality."

The people moving desperately to get rid of the magicians, are people who fail to recognize reality.

We have victory only because we have the magicians.

We have peace only because we have the magicians.

Once we discard magic, all that's left is past glory.

The fate of this country is indivisible with that of the magicians.

"As the efforts of those who hate the magicians continue to progress, eventually I will certainly run out of steam.... It's certainly a cruel plan."

—This country, is a country that exists only by keeping a monster.

".....His majesty, was in too much of a hurry. That weapon, is already out of the jurisdiction of this country."

“Was it a benefit for cooperating, for an alliance? Or, for trading of weapons?”

“A country broke the contract. We intended to cut off the means for self-defense.”

The Margrave avoided answering the question, but it’s possible that both are true.

The global trend of alienating the magicians, is finally spreading through this country known as the holy land of magicians.

While being threatened by the holy land that can pose a threat to the rest of humanity, the runaway emotions that would occur can be easily imagined.

That’s why instead of offering the new technology and information to other countries, they instead offered protection.

While selling off the magicians that are the lifeline of this country, if a new source of power isn’t obtained, the destruction of this country is the only outcome.

“So, are you satisfied now that I’ve revealed all of my circumstances?”

The Margrave, at the cost of the life of himself and his family, offered this information to try to slow the flow of destruction at least a little— but, I don’t know if it was voluntary.

To get rid of the magician families, they aim to kill me who is responsible for the survival of this country.

They who have observed me should know best that the [Flame Prison Princess] is their last serious obstacle on the battlefields.

Hoarse laughter comes from my throat.

“How foolish.”

—The development of the magic sealing stone, in less than a year, will reach the point where my magic can be completely nullified.

It is merely the framework of the fate laid out in the novel.

The foundation is laid.

This is the side story for the heroes.

This is [my story] for the heroes.

“You, are you planning to destroy this country that alienates the magicians?”

As I continue laughing softly, the Margrave abruptly asks this.

“...Rest assured. As long as [he] exists, the only fate for this country is to be saved. I move only in anticipation of him.”

“Him?”

Once the magic seal stone made for [Origa] who possess the highest capability for magic succeeds completely, I don’t know what will happen with Gil-sama.

Without telling that future, the novel ended.

The path to peace that the heroes will choose, is still unknown.

The future that the [author] had already laid out.

Perhaps not with distinct characters in the world, but it certainly exists in the settings [I] know of.

Even with my actions, Origa becomes the family head of the Ruzil, Mother died, and the world continues to move towards the exclusion of magicians.

—I may be able to affect the details of the story, but I can’t change the preset outcome.

That is, the truth that I have been forced to realize.

“The fate of the magicians is to perish. —That’s why, I’ve chosen to resist that fate.”

Fate is cruel.

No matter what Gil-sama does, no matter what effort he makes, whatever he tries to do to save this country, the future is confirmed.

In the future, magicians will continue to be born.

But, as all magicians are incapacitated with the magic sealing stones, they will only exist to be subjected to persecution.

Then, hunts for magicians will occur, all over the world.

In the future, such a powerful magician like Gil-sama, Atlas, or me, may not exist.

For the magicians born in such a future, who will protect them?

For the magicians who are treated like sinners from the moment they are born, who will protect them?

The future of the magicians is hopeless.

—But still, whether the path the heroes walk leads to a happy ending or a sad one, is not yet determined.

All I will accomplish, is the burning deaths of thousands of people.

A bloodthirsty killer. A witch.

But, I believe, that a future without a villain will certainly be different.

“I’ll be protecting this country until [he] takes the center stage... Please, overlook that some victims will occur in the process.”

“Planning on sacrificing people for the magicians?”

“I don’t want to hear that from you.”

From his actions, it seems that the Margrave wants to protect the future of this country, while I want to protect Gil-sama's ability to choose his future.

When trying to protect something different, the necessary sacrifice also changes.

Who I want to protect, has already been decided.

"Before I am the one who protects this country, I am the the head of the clan of fire. Protecting the magicians is my top priority. Even if it results in me being covered by sins, I will destroy all the magic sealing stones."

"...No matter how much of an excellent magician you are, it's impossible."

"Of course, it's certain that if I were to constantly use my magic to the point of depletion for a long time, I will die."

The Margrave's face takes on a strange expression after my words.

Once I who is called the strongest magician falls, it is a simple story for the rest of the magicians to be eschewed by the world.

For the resistance forces, neither the head of the Harvester family nor the head of the wind magic clan can be classified as offensive mages.

When the magic sealing stone that is improved to seal even [Origa] is used on the battlefield, all the mages will surely be powerless, and the country will be destroyed.

But, the odds are in my favor.

"The cores for the magic sealing stones have a limited quantity. Of the magic sealing stones, even now there are probably few enough to be counted on two hands. Once I dispose of them.... After that, I'm sure oniisama will take care of it somehow."

".....How did you obtain that information. That was confidential. It's impossible that it would have been leaked to any magician!"

As information hidden by the king, it's information impossible for [Origa] who serves the country to know.

But, [I] know all of it.

My best weapon is neither my powerful magic, nor subordinates, nor family. It's my knowledge.

The age at which [Origa] dies, the number of magic sealing stones, even the fate of the magicians.

Because I know it all, I fight.

The future, I will take hold of.

"....Hey, Margrave. Would you like to make a bet? On whether I die first, or if all the magic sealing stones are destroyed first?"

"You, what on earth are you?"

As he speaks these final words with an appalled voice, smoke distorts my view.

I look around, and notice that the fire has spread quite a bit.

It's had about ten minutes to spread now.

"Well, it seems our conversation has come to an end. Good night, Margrave."



Around my fifteenth birthday, rumours began to spread that Gil-sama discovered an aptitude for water magic.

It doesn't appear to be a huge gift, but it's still enough to draw everyone's attention that a child banished from the fire clan as incompetent awakened in magic.

I had already known about Gil-sama, long before I heard it from the mouth of a friend.

That night, I had a dream of a battlefield burning with an inferno.

I saw my face as I burned an injured hero to his death.

[My] face, shivering in delight.

———Please, oniisama. As quickly as possible, ____ me....

SIDE STORY

A REPORT ON THE WAR

Esmeralda Kingdom, led by the Emelda Dynasty for 262 years.

Secretary [---] reporting about the military situation.

The Shidalis allied forces encroached on our territory in the north, with the intention of war.

They broke our defensive line temporarily by disrupting the supply routes, isolating the troops.

In the three days before the fort recapturing tactic was implemented, which will be described later, 40% of the troop was lost.

How they discovered our supply routes so easily is puzzling, but although the presence of a traitor is suspected, there is no proof.

The northwestern Salud Fort surrendered to the enemy invasion in only two days.

Along with this, the fort commander, the magician Edlis Ville Harvester was killed.

Due to the disturbance in the command chain, many of the junior soldiers defected from the main unit.

The Eighth Knight Corps established by His Majesty the King was dispatched to this battlefield.

Salud Fort was successfully recaptured by the guerrilla tactics of the knights.

By collapsing a mountain road, the enemy's path was cut off.

Also, the knights confirmed successful destruction of one magic sealing device by a single person.

(This subject requires additional investigation.)

On the same day, in the forest located north of Salud Fort, the destruction of the magician corps led by Origa Emelda Ruzil was confirmed.

From there, the magician's path,



The name of the person who made the report is unreadable.

In addition, the information hereinafter has been burned away.

